

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KADUNA 00931 061510Z

ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KADUNA 931

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, NI

SUBJECT: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN NORTHERN STATES

REF: LAGOS 9942 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ELECTIONS FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY (CA) IN NORTH TOOK PLACE QUIETLY AS EXPECTED. HALF OF NORTHERN (25 PERCENT TOTAL) SEATS AT ASSEMBLY WERE TAKEN BY UNOPPOSED CANDIDATES WHICH INDICATIVE OF CONTINUING INFLUENCE OF NORTHERN TRADITIONAL LEADERS. WHILE NORTH DIVIDED ON SOME ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED AT CA, UNANIMITY, WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF MIDDLE BELT CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLYMEN, CAN BE PREDICTED ON ISSUES TOUCHING ISLAM. SEVERAL PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS WILL BE AT CA; LEADING NORTHERNER AT THIS TIME IS SHEHU SHAGARI.

2. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS - AS ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY, ELECTIONS IN THE NINE NORTHERN STATES TOOK PLACE IN CALM ATMOSPHERE. COMPLICATIONS IN SEVERAL CONSTITUENCIES INVOLVED SUIT AGAINST FEDECO IN KANO STATE OVER DISQUALIFICATION OF CANDIDATE FOR NON-CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KADUNA 00931 061510Z

PAYMENT OF TAXES, NEED FOR A SECOND ELECTION IN KATSINA CONSTITUENCY WHERE AUGUST 31 ELECTION RESULTED IN TIE AND ANOTHER TIED RESULT IN ZARIA CONSTITUENCY WHERE ONE CANDIDATE ALLEGING THAT HE DID NOT VOLUNTARILY WITHDRAW FROM STALEMATED ELECTION.

3. UNOPPOSED CANDIDACIES - BETTER THAN TWENTY-FIVE

PERCENT OF SEATS (55) IN CA WILL BE FILLED WITH NORTHERN

MEMBERS WHO WERE UNOPPOSED IN ELECTIONS. STATES WITH LARGEST PROPORTION OF UNOPPOSED SEATS WERE BORNO -- (10 OF 11), NIGER (6 OF 7), BAUCHI (7 OF 10), SOKOTO (8 OF 14) AND KANO (9 OF 16). IT GENERALLY BELIVED HERE THAT THESE WERE STATES IN WHICH PREFERENCES OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS FOR CERTAIN CANDIDATES WERE MOST CLEARLY AND FORCEFULLY ARTICULATED TO ELECTORS. (HOWEVER, THERE UNDOUBTEDLY WAS SOME BUYING OFF OF RIVAL CANDIDATES IN THESE AND OTHER STATES.) IN NIGER STATE THE ETSU (CHIEF) NUPE IS SAID TO HAVE HAD PRIVATE SESSIONS IN WHICH HE TOLF LG COUNCILLORS (ELECTORS) WHOM HE WISHED TO BE RETURNED TO ASSEMBLY; HIS PREFERENCES WERE CLEARLY HONORED.

4. BLOCS AND ISSUES AT CA - WHILE PROCESS OF RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE HAS NOT PROGRESSED FAR ENOUGH FOR BLOCS CERTAINLY WILL EMERGE AT CA. DEPENDING ON ISSUES, ASSEMBLYMEN FROM NORTH POTENTIALLY WILL FORM SHIFTING GROUPINGS ALONG TRIBLA, REGIONAL, AGE AND, TO RELATIVELY SMALL EXTENT, IDEOLOGICAL LINES. OBVIOUSLY, ISSUES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY AFFECTING ISLAM WILL UNIFY MOSLEM DELEGATES. ON CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 KADUNA 00931 061510Z

SUCH ISSUES, WHILE PRESSURE WILL BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON CHRISTIAN MIDDLE BELT DELEGATES IN THE NAME OF REGIONAL SOLIDARITY, IT DOUBTFUL THAT MIDDLE BELTERS WILL GO ALONG WITH REST OF NORTH UNLESS MOSLEMS COME UP WITH GOOD SYSTEM OF LOGROLLING. IT POSSIBLE (BUT BY NO MEANS CERTAIN) THAT RIFTS WILL APPEAR BETWEEN OLDER MORE TRADITIONAL NORTHERNERS AND YOUNGER (35 TO 40) BETTER-EDUCATED YOUNG TURKS WHO MUCH MORE INCLINED TO "PROGRESSIVE" ATTITUDES AND SOLUTIONS. ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO NORTH WILL BE: (A)

FODNTION IN DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF SHARIA COURT SYSTEM ON WHICH MOSLEM DELEGATES UNITED; (B) EXECUTIVE PRESIDENCY VS PRIME MINISTERIAL SYSTEM -- NORTH APPEARS DIVIDED ON THIS ONE INTO GROUP WHICH FEARS THAT EXECUTIVE PRESIDENCY AS NOW FORMULATED IN DRAFT CONSTITUTION WILL INEVITABLY DEGENERATE INTO DICTATORSHIP AND SUPPORTERS OF DRAFT WHO FEEL THAT CONCENTRATED EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP NECESSARY AND THAT OLD WESTMINSTER SYSTEM WAS PROVEN INADEQUATE DURING 1961-66 VICILIAN

GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHICH WAY NORTH WILL GO ON THIS ONE. (C) NORTHERN DELEGATES WILL BE EXCEEDINGLY WATCHFUL FOR ANY ATTEMPTS TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF CONSTITUTION IN SUCH A WAY AS TO REDUCE NUMBER OF NORTHERN SEATS IN FEDERAL LEGISLATURE. TEN EXISTING STATES (INCLUDING KWARA) WHICH COMPOSED OLD NORTHERN REGION WILL HAVE APPROXIMATELY 20 SEAT EDGE IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND FIVE SEAT EDGE IN SENATE OVER REST OF COUNTRY UNDER DRAFT CONSTITUTION FORMULA (WHICH USES 1963 CENSUS AS BASE.) (D) NORTH WILL ALSO WATCH CLOSELY FOR ANY ATTEMPT TO REVISE CONSTITUTION ALONG LINES THAT WOULD INTRODUCE ANY SERIOUS ELEMENT OF DERIVATION INTO REVENUE
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PAGE 04 KADUNA 00931 061510Z

ALLOCATION TO STATES BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

5. PEOPLE TO WATCH IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. (A) SHEHU SHAGARI (SOKOTO) POPULAR EX-FEDERAL COMMISSIONER, IS QUIETLY BEING TOUTED AS NORTHERN CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENCY OR PRIME MINISTERSHIP. HE HAS COMPLETE SUPPORT OF SOKOTO DELEGATION AND PROBABLY, GIVEN HIS EXCELLENT REPUTATION ELSEWHERE IN NORTH, WOULD DRAW SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FROM ALL NORTHERN STATES. (B) ALI MONGONO (BORNO), ANOTHER POTENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE POSITION WHO WOULD BE THE KANURI FAVORITE SON. (C) AMINU KANO, WHO WILL BE MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY BY VIRTUE HIS POSITION AS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AT CDC, IS ANOTHER CONTENDER FOR TOP SPOT. WHILE HE HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH LINKAGES IN EAST AND WEST BY FREQUENT VISITS, ACCEPTANCE OF SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS, ETC., THE NORTHERN POWER BASE WHICH HE WOULD NEED TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF AS A VIABLE CANDIDATE IS FAIRLY WEAK. (D) TOURI MUHAMMADU, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE NEW NIGERIAN, MAY WELL EMERGE AS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY SPOKESMAN FOR YOUNGER, INTENSELY NATIONALISTIC, ELEMENTS. WITH HIS NEW NIGERIAN BASE, HE VERY LIKELY TO EMERGE AS PART OF 1979 CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP ALTHOUGH PROBABLY NOT IN TOP SPOT.(5) (E) ADAMU CIROMA, AN EX-CBN GOVERNOR, AND EX-MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NEW NIGERIAN, IS WILY AND RESPECTED (ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY LIKED) NORTH. HE IS LIKELY TO WORK CLOSELY WITH TOURI MUHAMMADU IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND CERTAINLY HAS AMBITIONS FOR LEADERSHIP POSITION AT NATIONAL LEVEL. (F) ONE PERSON WHO WILL NOT BE AT CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS INUWA WADA, WHO WAS DISQUALIFIED IN LG ELECTION
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PAGE 05 KADUNA 00931 061510Z

FOR ALLEGED BRIBERY. WHILE HIS
DISQUALIFICATION HAS DAMAGED HIM FAIRLY SERIOUSLY,
THERE NO DOUBT THAT SOME KANO STATE
CO DTITUENT MEMBERS WILL ACCEPT HIS GUIDANCE. HE
IS ANOTHER PRESIDENTIAL/PRIME MINISTERIAL ASPIRANT.
(G) OTHERS WHO LIKELY TO BE INFLUENTIAL AMONG
NORTHERN DELEGATIONS ARE KAM SALEM (BORNO); SULE
MINJIBIR (KANO); IBRAHIM DASUKI AND SHEHU
MALAMI, BOTH OF SOKOTO.
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